

Date

Sanettria Glasper Pleasant
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
P.O. Box 94245
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70504

Re: Ethics Board Docket No. 2021-332

Dear Ms. Pleasant:

The Louisiana Board of Ethics, at its July 9, 2021 meeting, considered a request from the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development ("DOTD") to approve a plan allowing DOTD to hire Levi Townsend, the son of DOTD employee Angela Townsend, as a mobile equipment operator and for Ms. Townsend to recuse herself from any matters relating to her son's employment.

FACTS PROVIDED

You provided that Angela Townsend is currently employed as Administrative Coordinator 4 for DOTD District 05. Her duties do not generally include management or supervisory duties over mobile equipment operators, but do include serving as the backup timekeeper when the primary timekeeper is not available. DOTD would like to hire Ms. Townsend's son, Levi Townsend, as a Mobile Equipment Operator within DOTD District 05.

DOTD has submitted a plan to avoid any potential violation of La. R.S. 42:1112 or La. R.S. 42:1119, whereby Ms. Townsend would recuse herself from participating in any transaction or appointing authority duties involving Levi Townsend including, but not limited to, approving leave, signing performance evaluation documents and recommending hiring/promotions. Further, Ms. Townsend would recuse herself from performing any functional supervision of Levi Townsend at any time, which includes, but is not limited to, determining work assignments, training, reviewing work, and approving work. Lesa "Shari" Wade, Administrative Coordinator 4, would act as the primary timekeeper for Levi Townsend, and in the event that Ms. Wade is unavailable, Lisa Brinson, Accounting Technician, will act as the backup timekeeper.

LAWS

La. R.S. 42:1112B(1) states that no public servant shall participate in a transaction involving the governmental entity in which, to his actual knowledge, any member of his immediate family has a substantial economic interest.

La. R.S. 42:1119A states that no member of the immediate family of an agency head shall be employed in his agency.

La. R.S. 42:1112C allows a disqualification plan to be developed in accordance with rules adopted by the Board to remove a public servant from participating in transactions that would otherwise present violations of Section 1112 of the Code.

CONCLUSION

Based on the facts presented, the Board concluded, and instructed me to inform you, that it approved the plan as proposed as it complies with the criteria set forth in Chapter 14 of the Rules for the Board of Ethics. Changes to the facts as presented may result in a different application of the provisions of the Code of Ethics. The Board issues no opinion as to past conduct or as to laws other than the Code of Governmental Ethics. If you have any questions, please contact me at (800) 842-6630 or (225) 219-5600.

Sincerely,

LOUISIANA BOARD OF ETHICS

Charles E. Reeves, Jr.
For the Board

DISCLAIMER
This is a draft opinion and it is **NOT** an opinion of the Louisiana Board of Ethics.
No party may rely on the facts or conclusions. The analysis and conclusions herein are provided for discussion purposes only and are subject to change or revision at the meeting of the Board of Ethics at which this matter is considered.